

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

1-6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) A computer-based document retrieval method,  
comprising the steps of:

receiving first characteristic terms from a user;

performing a search process on said first characteristic terms and displaying the result of said search process on a screen;

receiving second characteristic terms which are entered by the user in accordance with the result of said search process, the user identifying items shown on the screen displaying the result to indicate second characteristic terms;

comparing said first characteristic terms and said second characteristic terms;  
and

displaying the result of said comparison on the screen.

8. (Original) A document retrieval support method according to claim 7,  
wherein displayed characteristic terms classified solely as said second characteristic

terms are differentiated from the other characteristic terms when said first characteristic terms and said second characteristic terms are compared.

9. (Original) The document retrieval support method according to claim 7, wherein characteristic terms classified solely as said second characteristic terms are assigned an increased weight setting when said first characteristic terms and said second characteristic terms are compared.

10-12. (Canceled)

13. (New) A computer-based document retrieval system, comprising:  
means for receiving first characteristic terms from a user;  
means for performing a search process on said first characteristic terms and displaying the result of said search process on a screen;  
means for receiving second characteristic terms which are entered by the user in accordance with the result of said search process, the user entering second characteristic terms by identifying items shown on the screen displaying the result;  
means for comparing said first characteristic terms and said second characteristic terms; and  
means for displaying the result of said comparison on the screen.

14. (New) The computer-based document retrieval system according to claim 13, wherein displayed characteristic terms classified solely as said second characteristic terms are differentiated from the other characteristic terms when said first characteristic terms and said second characteristic terms are compared.

15. (New) The computer-based document retrieval system according to claim 13, wherein characteristic terms classified solely as said second characteristic terms are assigned an increased weight setting when said first characteristic terms and said second characteristic terms are compared.